

CITY OF FITCHBURG CONSERVATION COMMISSION

MEETING MINUTES TUESDAY, JANUARY 26, 2016

COMMISSIONERS IN ATTENDANCE: John Koutonen, Harry Karis, Tom Starr, Mike Donnelly, Dennis DeGara (6)

STAFF IN ATTENDANCE: Tim Smith, Mike O'Hara

CALL TO ORDER: Meeting called to order at 6:04 p.m. in the 2nd Floor Conference Room, Fitchburg Fire Headquarters, 33 North St.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Notice of Intent -Notice of Intent - Edgewater Homes, Inc., 0 Rindge Rd. (near McKay School) - sewer connection in Riverfront Area (Request postpone to March 29th)

Neither Elijah Ketola nor his engineer Paul Grasewicz could attend meeting. Elijah had sent email requesting continuance. They had rec'd Tim's review letter and needed time to respond.

Notice of Intent - Fitchburg DPW - Shea St. Drainage Improvements, Phase II

DPW Commissioner Lenny Laakso, and Adam Cline of DPW-Engineering Division in to discuss plans and scope of work for Phase II.

Lenny: Project continues the MEMA-funded drainage improvements in Shea St.- Autumn Dr. area done in 2014. There have been flooding problems there for about 50 years. Approx. 25 years ago a berm was installed on west side parallel to Shea St. Berm was intended to hold back runoff from Shea St. and Oak Hill C.C area but stormwater often surcharges the system, pipes are undersized.

Phase II consists of replacing the berm on the westerly side of Shea Street with a larger capacity stormwater swale stretching from Jane Ave. southerly to just past Autumn Dr. A new pipe will connect to the new, larger capacity culverts in Autumn Drive. There will be four inlets from Shea St. to the new swale. Swale will be approx. 1,150 feet long. Side slopes will be 3:1. It is designed to hold the 100-year flood.

The work will occur with the Shea St. right-of-way and Oak Hill C.C. property.

Jamie Rheault, Whitman & Bingham is reviewing plans on behalf of Oak Hill C.C. There may need to be a culvert installed in future to allow access to Oak Hill's property. Amount of resource area disturbed is approx. 15,500 sq. ft.

Commission wants to see an O & M plan for the project.

Timeline: After OOC obtained, DPW will send schedule to MEMA and obtain easements from the property owners affected.

Q: Has there been a silting problem at the outlet of Shea Brook? How is flow to outlet to brook at Shea St. Extension controlled? Baffles will control the rate of stormwater getting there.

Mike D: Won't the additional faster flow suspend silt and end up downstream in Shea Brook?

Baffles will reduce sediment from reaching brook, outfall at Shea Street extension is about half-mile from Notown reservoir, any sediment carried along will settle out in that distance.

DPW will need to monitor outfall and remove accumulated sediment. They have kept Leominster Water Dept. informed of project.

Jamie Rheault, representing Oak Hill C.C: OHCC's Executive Committee has OKed signing the NOI & going thru permitting process. They will need to work out easements w/ the City, and will need a vote of the Board of Trustees to convey the easements. OHCC is looking for a couple of water & sewer stubs installed under the swale and possibly culverts on a couple of sections of swale to allow future access to property if needed.

Hearing continued to next meeting.
Commission will hold site visit Sat. Jan. 4:30 @ 8:00 a.m.

Notice of Intent - Fitchburg Community Development Dept., River Street streetscape improvements
Paul Furgal & Katie Wilkins of Tighe & Bond.

Project funded by MassWorks grant.

Scope of work from Main St./ School St. intersection up Main St. for approx. 400 feet, and up River St. to about 245 River St.

River St. to be rebuilt, narrower lanes, sidewalks & bike lanes both sides, 32 feet width curb to curb.

Main/River Street intersection will be redone as a mini-Roundabout w/ one-foot wide mountable curb – no planting island in the middle. Radius is designed for a WB-67 turning template largest diameter possible.

Q: Why not continue Man Street improvements down to Fitchburg Yarn driveway, and shorten River St. improvements to end at Sheldon St.?

Tim: Any improvements to water quality? Yes, where installing new CBs. Five deep sump CBs will be installed. This is more of a resurfacing project.

Is all previously developed area, no additional point source discharges, asking for a negative determination.

Looking to bid work Feb/March and start construction early May. Substantial completion date Oct. 2016.

Q: Proposed bike path will just end?

Paul: Will blend in with existing road striping. Since a MassWorks funded project, need to conform to MassDOT 'Complete Streets' policy. Bike or shared –use lane req'd where possible.

Questions on who came up w/ planting plan - & where specific species of trees are planted.

Suggested to continue to next meeting to give time to review.

Agreed: Push April meeting up one week to Feb. 16th. That will be the monthly meeting.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Nashua R. Watershed Assoc. – U.S. Forest Service grant – replanting in 300-foot riparian buffer

Al Futterman of NRWA had handouts describing program. Purpose is to increase size of riparian buffers to benefit water quality. Goal is to maintain less than 4% impervious cover in 300-foot riparian zone.

In this area, focus is on Whitman River watershed in West Fitchburg.

NRWA interested in Conservation Commissions helping out w/ identifying landowners that may be receptive to working with the program. Financial incentives available to for tree planting, development of Forest Stewardship Plans, etc.

ANRADs - off Hemlock, St. Jude & Ashburnham St. - extension, DiBiase

Two delineations of land originally before the Commission in 2007 will be expiring soon, one extension already granted. Will be referred to Tim for review.

Suggestion made that the new C. Solicitor and Asst. City Solicitor be invited to next ConCom meeting for introductions & to discuss enforcement, etc. and new Mayor, as well.

Agreed next meeting would be Tues. Feb 16th @ 5:00 p.m. at Fire station

Motion made & seconded to adjourn. Vote unanimous.

Meeting adjourned: 8:08 p.m.

Next meeting: 2/16/2016